

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 11877

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, JA
SUBJECT: SOHYO SEC GEN TOMIZUKA'S VIEWS ON SOHYO'S INTER-
NATIONAL ROLE

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SUMMARY: IN SPEECH REPORTING ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO U.S.
AND WESTERN EUROPE, SOHYO SEC GEN TOMIZUKA, WHILE REAFFIRM-
ING SOHYO'S COMMITMENT TO BASIC POLICY OF "POSITIVE
NEUTRALITY" ON EAST-WEST POLITICAL ISSUES, SAID SOHYO
MUST HAVE CLOSER TIES WITH UNIONS IN CAPITALIST SOCIETIES
AND THEREFORE WOULD DE-EMPHASIZE ITS EXCHANGES WITH
COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. TOMIZUKA PLACED GREAT IMPORTANCE
ON SOHYO'S RECENT EFFORTS TO PATCH UP DIFFERENCES WITH
AFL-CIO. HE SAID TALKS WITH WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION
LEADERS CONVINCED HIM THAT LENINISM HAD NOTHING TO OFFER
EUROPEAN WORKERS, WFTU EXISTED MERELY TO DEFEND SOVIET
POLITICAL INTERESTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND SOVIETS
THEMSELVES REPEATED ONLY STALE CLICHES IN FACE OF CURRENT
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ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. WHILE TOMIZUKA'S MOTIVES ARE SUBJECT
TO CONSIDERABLE DEBATE HERE, PUBLICLY HE HAS NOW GONE
FURTHER THAN ANY PREVIOUS SOHYO LEADER IN IDENTIFYING
HIS FEDERATION'S INTERESTS WITH THOSE OF WESTERN UNIONS.
SHOULD CURRENT EFFORTS OF SOHYO PRESIDENT MAKIEDA AND
TOMIZUKA TO LEAD SOHYO OUT OF IDEOLOGICAL WILDERNESS BE
REBUFFED, THEY COULD FIND THEMSELVES QUICKLY ISOLATED

WITHIN SOHYO AND IN TROUBLE. END SUMMARY.
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1. IN PUBLIC LECTURE AT JAPAN INSTITUTE OF LABOR (JIL)
JUNE 26, SOHYO SECGEN TOMIZUKA SUMMED UP IMPRESSIONS GAINED
DURING RECENT MEETINGS WITH U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPEAN LABOR
LEADERS AND OUTLINED WHAT HE TERMED "A NEW ACTIVE INTER-
NATIONAL POLICY" FOR SOHYO.

2. WITH REGARD TO U.S. STAY, TOMIZUKA SAID THAT HE AND
OFFICERS OF THREE OTHER JAPANESE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS (WHO
HAD TRAVELED TOGETHER TO ATTEND UNSSOD) WERE EXTREMELY
PLEASED BY ATTENTION PAID TO THEM IN WASHINGTON BY USG AND
AFL-CIO OFFICIALS. THEY WERE SURPRISED AND WORRIED,
HOWEVER, BY AMERICAN CRITICISM OF JAPAN FOR FAILING TO
REDUCE ITS TRADE SURPLUS AND OF JAPANESE LABOR MOVEMENT
FOR ACTING MORE LIKE APOLOGISTS FOR GOJ ECONOMIC POLICIES
THAN LIKE CHAMPIONS OF EXPANDED BENEFITS FOR JAPANESE
WORKERS (E.G., SHORTER WORK WEEK AND MORE VACATIONS).
TOMIZUKA SAID HE PERSONALLY AGREED WITH DEPUTY STR WOLFF'S
ASSESSMENT OF JAPANESE UNIONS AS "TOO SOFT" ON GOJ POLICIES
AND HAD COME TO REALIZE THAT SOHYO AND OTHER FEDERATIONS
MUST DO MORE TO CHAMPION CONSUMER INTERESTS. TOMIZUKA
NOTED CONTRAST WITH "POWERFUL AND INDEPENDENT" U.S. LABOR
MOVEMENT, AS DEMONSTRATED BY AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY'S
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SHARP CRITICISM TO JAPANESE VISITORS OF CARTER ADMINISTRA-
TION'S POLICIES.

3. TOMIZUKA SAID THAT IN MEETING WITH AFL-CIO, HE CONFIRMED
THAT PRESIDENT MEANY HAD AGREED TO SEND AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF TEACHERS PRESIDENT SHANKER AS HIS PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
TO SOHYO CONVENTION AFTER SOHYO AGREED TO REFRAIN "THIS
TIME" FROM INVITING FRENCH CGT AND ITALIAN CGIL AS WELL AS
SOVIETS AND EASTERN EUROPEANS. TOMIZUKA ALSO ANNOUNCED
THAT FIVE-MEMBER SOHYO DELEGATION, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVE
OF STEEL WORKERS (TEKKO ROREN) AS WELL AS OFFICERS FROM
PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS, WOULD VISIT WASHINGTON FIRST WEEK IN
OCTOBER FOR TALKS WITH AFL-CIO ON BILATERAL TRADE PROBLEMS,
INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS, AND OTHER ISSUES OF COMMON
CONCERN.

4. MEETINGS WITH CGT, BRITISH TUC, AND GERMAN DGB CON-
VINCED TOMIZUKA THAT SOVIET BRAND MARXISM-LENINISM HAD
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO OFFER WESTERN EUROPEAN UNIONS. THEY,
LIKE THEIR JAPANESE AND U.S. COUNTERPARTS, ACCEPTED AS A
GIVEN CONTINUATION FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE OF CAPITALIST OR
MIXED ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND WERE PREOCCUPIED BY SEARCH FOR

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO PRESSING PROBLEMS OF HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND LOW ECONOMIC GROWTH. WHILE CLAIMING THAT MARXISM AS SUCH MIGHT STILL HAVE SOME APPEAL AS PHILOSOPHY, TOMIZUKA SAID THAT FOR WESTERN EUROPEANS LENINISM WAS MERELY COLLECTION OF CLICHES ASSEMBLED BY SOVIETS TO EXPLAIN ECONOMIC ISSUES THEY REALLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND. IN THIS CONTEXT, TOMIZUKA RECALLED THAT IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS OF ECONOMIC ISSUES WHICH HE HAD WITH SOVIET LABOR REPRESENTATIVES, THEY MERELY REPEATED THAT SOVIET UNION HAD NO UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM AND INSISTED THAT SOVIET UNION WAS NUMBER ONE IN EVERYTHING. TOMIZUKA ALSO WAS STRUCK BY CGT'S PARTICULARLY STRONG CRITICISM OF WFTU AS

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ORGANIZATION DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO DEFENDING SOVIET UNION'S POLITICAL POSITION IN EASTERN EUROPE.

5. TOMIZUKA URGED JAPANESE LEFT TO STUDY CAREFULLY IMPLICATIONS FOR JAPAN OF DEFEAT OF SOCIALIST-COMMUNIST ALLIANCE IN RECENT FRENCH ELECTIONS. TOMIZUKA SAID FRENCH LEFT HAD OFFERED ONLY OLD SLOGAN OF NATIONALIZATION AS SOLUTION TO FRENCH ECONOMIC CRISIS AND HAD FAILED TO PROPOSE ANY CONCRETE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH TRADE AND UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS. IN ADDITION, FRENCH SOCIALISTS HAD LOST THEIR MASS APPEAL AND REALIZED TOO LATE THAT COMMUNISTS WERE EATING AWAY AT THEIR ELECTORAL BASE. TOMIZUKA NOTED THAT DEFEAT OF LEFT HAD NOW RESULTED IN

SPATE OF MUTUAL RECRIMINATION BETWEEN COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS AND WAS LEADING FRENCH LABOR UNIONS AWAY FROM ELECTORAL SOLUTIONS TO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

6. TOMIZUKA SAID TRIP TO EUROPE REINFORCED HIS BELIEF THAT SOHYO'S POLICY OF "POSITIVE NEUTRALITY," WHILE CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBLY TOO VISIONARY DURING COLD-WAR PERIOD OF EAST-WEST CONFLICT, WAS IDEALLY SUITED TO PRESENT SITUATION OF MULTIPOLAR DIPLOMACY, CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, AND CONFUSION IN INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT. HE CITED AS EXAMPLES OF "AMBIGUITY" IN INTERNATIONAL SITUATION U.S.-PRC RAPPROCHEMENT, CHINA-SOVIET QUARREL, AFL-CIO DIFFERENCES WITH DGB OVER VALUE OF ICFTU, AND CGT'S VIRTUAL ABANDONMENT OF WFTU. NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE KEY PROBLEMS FACING JAPANESE WORKERS WERE SHARED BY UNIONS IN OTHER CAPITALIST COUNTRIES, SOHYO FOR TIME BEING WOULD GREATLY REDUCE ITS EXCHANGES WITH SO-CALLED "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES AND INSTEAD WOULD PLACE EMPHASIS ON SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH AMERICAN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN UNIONS. TOMIZUKA SAID THAT WHILE HE RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE OF DOMEI'S TIES WITH WESTERN UNIONS AND WAS NOT TRYING TO HARM THEM, IT WAS NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT FOR SOHYO ALSO TO DO ITS BIT TO PREVENT TRADE ISSUES FROM ISOLATING JAPAN EVEN FURTHER FROM U.S. AND EC. FORTHCOMING SOHYO CONVENTION WOULD THEREFORE BE REQUESTED TO ADOPT THIS NEW APPROACH TO WESTERN UNIONS, TO AUTHORIZE OPENING OF SOHYO LIAISON OFFICE IN WESTERN EUROPE (POSSIBLY IN PARIS) AND TO APPROVE SOHYO PARTICIPATION IN OECD'S TRADE UNION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.
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7. COMMENT: TOMIZUKA'S TRAVEL IMPRESSIONS AND CONVENTION PROPOSALS ARE CONSISTENT WITH APPROACH SOHYO PRESIDENT MAKIEDA AND HE HAVE TAKEN TO SOHYO'S INTERNATIONAL TIES EVER SINCE THEY TOOK OFFICE IN 1976. WHILE CONTINUING TO UPHOLD VALIDITY OF SOHYO'S LONGSTANDING ARTICLES OF FAITH IN MARXISM AND NEUTRALISM, THEY HAVE SET ABOUT REDEFINING THEM IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GIVE SOHYO MAXIMUM
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FLEXIBILITY ON BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL STAGE. TOMIZUKA IN PARTICULAR, WHILE PROCLAIMING HIS UNSWERVING ALLEGIANCE TO JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY AND

COMMITMENT TO GOALS OF MARXIST LEFT, MEETS REGULARLY WITH LDP POLITICIANS AND MINISTRY OF LABOR OFFICIALS TO NEGOTIATE BACKROOM DEALS ON TAX REDUCTION, WAGE INCREASES AND OTHER PENDING ISSUES. MANY DOMEI LEADERS CONSIDER TOMIZUKA TO BE UNPRINCIPLED OPPORTUNIST AND SOHYO LEADERSHIP INTERESTED ONLY IN MAINTAINING UNITY OF ORGANIZATION. OTHERS, PARTICULARLY IN MINISTRY OF LABOR, CONSIDER TOMIZUKA TO BE EXAMPLE OF NEW GENERATION OF JAPANESE PUBLIC-SECTOR LABOR LEADER, FREE OF IDEOLOGICAL BAGGAGE OF POSTWAR PERIOD AND ABLE TO WORK OUT DEALS WITH CONSERVATIVE ESTABLISHMENT.

8. IN ANY CASE, TOMIZUKA IS CLEARLY HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO SHIFTS OF POLITICAL WIND WITHIN SOHYO. THEREFORE HIS STATEMENTS AT JIL LECTURE ARE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGING FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST, THEY INDICATE THAT ONE OF FEDERATION'S MOST SKILLFUL POLITICIANS NOW BELIEVES POLICY OF GREATER CONTACTS WITH WESTERN LABOR MOVEMENT ENJOYS WIDE-SCALE SUPPORT WITHIN SOHYO. SECONDLY, TOMIZUKA NOW HAS GONE FURTHER THAN ANY PREVIOUS SOHYO LEADER IN IDENTIFYING HIS FEDERATION'S INTERESTS WITH THOSE OF WESTERN DEMOCRATIC UNIONS AND HAS DONE SO NOT JUST IN PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH FOREIGNERS BUT IN PUBLIC FORUM FUNDED BY JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND ATTENDED BY ESTABLISHMENT SCHOLARS. TOMIZUKA'S FORTHRIGHT STATEMENTS SHOULD ALSO HELP TO BOLSTER POSITION OF CHAIRMAN MAKIEDA, WHO REALLY INITIATED NEW APPROACH TO THE AFL-CIO, AND SHOULD PUT TO REST RUMORS OF LEADERSHIP DIVISION ON ISSUE OF CLOSER TIES WITH THE WEST.

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9. HOWEVER, REGARDLESS OF DEGREE OF SOHYO LEADERS
PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH AFL-CIO
AND OTHER WESTERN LABOR MOVEMENTS -- WE BELIEVE MAKIEDA,
AT LEAST, IS QUITE SINCERE -- THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS TO
LEAD SOHYO OUT OF IDEOLOGICAL WILDERNESS PITS THEM AGAINST
TWENTY YEARS OF SOHYO TRADITION. SHOULD THEIR STRATEGY
FAIL TO PRODUCE SOME SIGN OF PROGRESS TOWARD IMPROVED
RELATIONS WITH WEST, BOTH LEADERS WOULD FIND THEMSELVES
IN TROUBLE.
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